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QUICK GRASP OF FAITH

We have made the Qur'an easy to remember.
But is there anyone who will take heed?
(Surat al-Qamar: 17)

Harun Yahya

Goodword
B • O • O • K • S

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QUESTION 1

How do we realize the existence of Allah?

The plants, animals, seas, mountains, and people we see when we look around, and everything else in the micro universe – living or non-living – which we cannot see, are all obvious evidence of a superior wisdom which has brought them into being. Similarly, the equilibrium, order, and perfect creation present in the entire universe also prove the existence of a supreme possessor of knowledge who has designed them perfectly. The possessor of this wisdom and knowledge is Allah.

We realize the existence of Allah from the perfect systems He created and the awesome qualities of living or non-living entities. This perfection is highlighted in the Qur'an:

**He created the seven heavens one above the other.
You will not find any flaw in the creation of the All-
Merciful. Look again—do you see any gaps? Then look
again and again. Your eyes will become dazzled and
exhausted!**
(Surat
al-Mulk: 3-4)

QUESTION 2

How do we know Allah?

It is again the perfect creation throughout the universe that introduces to us the supreme power of Allah. However, Allah has

principally introduced Himself to us in the Qur'an, which He has sent down to people as a guide to right living. In the Qur'an, all the supreme qualities of Allah, His wisdom, knowledge, compassion, mercy, justice, omnipresence, His seeing and hearing everything, His being the sole owner and sole God of the Heavens, the Earth and all that lies between and His being the sole sovereign of the kingdom are conveyed to us.

He is Allah – there is no god but Him. He is the Knower of the Unseen and the Visible. He is the Compassionate and Most Merciful. He is Allah – there is no god but Him. He is the King, the Most Pure, the Perfect Giver of Peace, the Trustworthy, the Safeguarder, the Almighty, the Compeller, the Supremely Great. May Allah be exalted above all they associate with Him. He is Allah – the Creator, the Maker, the Giver of Form. To Him belong the Most Beautiful Names. Everything in the heavens and earth glorifies Him. He is the Almighty, the All-Wise. (Surat al-Hashr: 22-24)

QUESTION 3

What is the purpose of our creation?

Allah tells us the purpose for our creation as follows:

I only created jinn and man to worship Me. (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 56)

As stated in this verse, the purpose of man's existence on Earth is his being just a servant of Allah, worshipping Him and gaining His approval. Man is tested on this subject as long as he is on this Earth.

QUESTION 4

Why are we tested?

Allah tests people in the world to distinguish the ones who believe in Him from those who don't, and to determine which of the believers are best in their behaviour. Therefore, it is not enough for an individual to say "I believe". As long as one lives, his faith and devotion to Allah, his perseverance in religion, in short, his steadfastness in being a servant of Allah are tested in specially created conditions and environments. Allah states this truth in the following verse:

He created death and life to test which of you acquitted himself best. He is the Almighty, the Ever-Forgiving. (Surat al-Mulk: 2)

QUESTION 5

How are we to be servants of Allah?

To be a servant of Allah means leading one's whole life for the purpose of gaining Allah's pleasure and approval. It means trying to carry out all actions in the best possible manner so as to gain Allah's approval, fearing Allah alone and orienting all one's ideas, words, and deeds to this purpose. Allah has brought it to our attention in the Qur'an that being a servant to Him covers the whole life of the individual:

Say: 'My salat (prayers) and my devotions, my living and my dying, are for Allah alone, the Lord of all the

QUESTION 6

Why is religion necessary?

What a man who believes in the existence of Allah has to do first, is learn the orders of his Creator and the things that will please Him, Who gave him a soul when he was nothing, made him live, eat, and drink, and gave him health. Then he has to spend his whole life abiding by Allah's orders and seeking Allah's approval. It is religion that shows us the morals, behaviour, and way of life of which Allah will approve. Allah has made it clear in the Qur'an that people who abide by religion will be on the true path, whereas others will go astray.

He whose breast is opened to Islam is therefore illuminated by his Lord. Woe to those whose hearts are hardened against the remembrance of Allah! Such people are clearly misguided. (Surat az-Zumar: 22)

QUESTION 7

How does one live one's religion (deen)?

People who believe in Allah, and who humbly obey Him, organize their lives in accordance with Allah's recommendations

in the Qur'an. He who lives the religion leads his life, complying with the right things his conscience inspires in him and abandoning everything bad that his self, the negative voice within him, orders. Allah states in the Qur'an that He created men with the predisposition to live their religion:

Therefore, stand firm in your devotion to the true Faith, the upright Faith which Allah created for man to embrace. There is no changing Allah's creation. That is the true Faith, although most people may not know it. (Surat ar-Rum: 30)

QUESTION 8

How can there be morals without religion?

In societies where there is no religion, people become predisposed to commit all kinds of immoral acts. For instance, a religious person would never take a bribe, gamble, feel envy, or lie because he would know that he would have to account for these actions in the hereafter. Yet, an irreligious person is prone to doing all these things. It is not enough for a man to say, "I am an atheist but I don't take bribes", or "I am an atheist but I don't gamble", because a man who does not fear Allah and who does not believe that he is going to give an account of himself in the hereafter may do any one of these things when the situation or conditions change. A person who says, "I am an atheist but I do not commit fornication" may do so at some place where fornication is considered normal. Or a person who says that he does not take bribes may say, "My son is sick and about to die, therefore I have to take the bribe", if he has no fear of Allah. In a state of

irreligiousness, even theft may be considered legitimate under certain conditions. For instance, people of no religion may not consider taking towels or decorative accessories from hotels and recreation centres as stealing to their own way of understanding.

However, a religious person does not display such immorality, because he fears Allah and does not forget that Allah knows his intentions as well as his thoughts. He acts sincerely and avoids sin.

A person who is distant from religion may say “I am an atheist but I am forgiving. I feel neither vengeance nor hate,” but one day some untoward event may cause him to lose his self-control and display the most unexpected behaviour. He may attempt to kill or injure someone, because the morality he adopts is one that changes according to the environment and conditions of the place in which he lives.

Yet, one who believes in Allah and in the hereafter never deviates from his good morals, whatever the conditions or the environment may be. His morality is not “variable” but immutable. Allah refers to the superior morals of religious people in His verses:

Those who keep faith with Allah and do not break their agreement; those who join what Allah has commanded to be joined and are afraid of their Lord and fear an evil Reckoning; those who are steadfast in seeking the face of their Lord, and attend to their salat (regular prayer) and give alms from what We have given them, secretly and openly, and stave off evil with good, it is they who will attain the Ultimate Abode (Surat ar-Ra’d: 20-22)

QUESTION 9

What would happen to the social system without religion?

In an environment without religion, the first concept to be eliminated is that of the family. Values such as loyalty, fidelity, allegiance, love, and respect, which sustain the family, are totally abandoned. It must be remembered that the family is the foundation of society and if the family collapses, so does society. Even the state and the nation have no reason to exist, since all moral values that underpin the state and the nation have been obliterated.

Furthermore, in irreligious societies, there is no reason left for anyone to feel respect, love or compassion for anyone else. This leads to social anarchy. The rich hate the poor, the poor hate the rich. Anger develops against those who are handicapped or needy. Or aggression towards different nations rises. The workers become aggressive towards their employers and the employers towards their workers, fathers turn against their sons and the sons against their fathers.

The reason for continuous bloodshed and the “third page news” in the newspapers is irreligion. On these pages, every day, we see news coverage about people who heedlessly kill each other for very insignificant causes.

However, a man who knows that he is going to be accountable in the hereafter cannot point a gun at somebody else’s head and shoot him. He knows that Allah has forbidden men to commit crimes, and his fear of Allah ensures that he will avoid divine retribution.

Do not corrupt the earth after it has been purged of evil. Call on Him fearfully and eagerly. Allah's mercy is within reach of the righteous. (Surat al-A'raf: 56)

The cause for suicides being so common is also irreligion. One who commits suicide in fact commits murder. For instance, someone who attempts to commit suicide because his girl friend has left him should ask himself these questions: Would he think of committing suicide for that girl, if she became disabled, or became old, or if her face had been badly burned? Of course, he would not; he overvalues her in his mind when he sees her as elegant and healthy and he ascribes her as a partner to Allah, thinking her to be more important than Allah, the hereafter, and religion. He risks dying for her.

But someone who is guided by the Qur'an would never do such a thing. He would not even give it a moment of thought. A believer lives only for Allah's approval and exercises patience in the face of all the difficulties and problems Allah afflicts him within this world. And he does not forget that he is going to be rewarded for his patience both in this world and the hereafter many times over.

Stealing too is very common in irreligious societies. A man who steals does not think of how much trouble he causes to the person he steals from. He takes ten years of his victim's earnings in a single night and doesn't worry about how much he will suffer. As he inflicts pain on the other person, he may also feel pangs of conscience. But if he does not, this is an even worse state of affairs. It means that the thief has become hardened to committing all kinds of immoral acts.

In irreligious societies, values like hospitality, making sacrifices for each other, solidarity, and generosity totally disappear. First of all, people do not value each other as the human beings they are, because they see each other as beings that have evolved from

monkeys. No one wants to welcome, serve, honour or offer nice things to anyone he thinks has evolved from an ape. People sharing this thought do not value each other. Nobody thinks about the health, welfare, or comfort of others. They do not worry about anybody getting hurt nor do they try to prevent such a thing. For instance, in hospitals people who are about to die are left lying on stretchers for indefinite periods; nobody cares about them. Or the owner of a restaurant operating under extremely dirty, unhealthy conditions does not worry about the harm he may inflict on the health of the people who eat there. He only cares about the money he is making. These are a few examples that show up in our daily lives. Here, the main logic is that people are good to each other only if they can expect some profit in return. By the moral standards of the Qur'an, however, people value each other as servants of Allah. They do not expect anything in return for a favour; on the contrary, they try to gain Allah's approval by continuously doing good deeds, and compete with each other in doing good.

QUESTION 10

Which material and spiritual benefits does observance of the morals of the Qur'an bring to society?

We have to note that religion, as referred to here, is a moral way of life, pleasing to Allah and chosen by Him as being most appropriate to the nature of all mankind. It is a way of life which is free of all kinds of superstitions and myths, and is totally under the guidance of the Qur'an.

Religion creates a profoundly, spiritual, peaceful, and secure atmosphere of morality. The chaos of anarchy that causes great damage to the state and the nation definitely ends because for fear of Allah, people avoid unruliness and causing mischief. Also, people with moral values stand up for their state and nation and do not stop short of any kind of sacrifice. Such people always work for the welfare and security of their country.

In a society where the morals of the Qur'an are practiced, people are extremely respectful towards each other and everyone tries to ensure the comfort and security of one another because solidarity, unity, and cooperation are very important according to the tenets of Islam. Everyone has to put the comfort and interest of others before himself. The following is an example of the morality of believers:

Those who were already settled in Madinah, and had adopted the Faith, before they came, loved¹ those who came to them for refuge and entertained no desire in their hearts for things given to the (latter), but gave them preference over themselves even if they themselves were needy. It is the people who are safeguarded from the avarice of their own selves who are successful. (Surat al-Hashr: 9)

In an environment where people go in fear of Allah, everyone works for the welfare of society. No one acts extravagantly; everyone cooperates and works in solidarity watching out for the interests of the other. The result is a rich society with a high level of welfare.

In such a society, moral richness as well as material richness prevails. The state of chaos where all kinds of rebellious attitudes are displayed totally disappears. Everyone behaves with restraint and every problem is solved in a logical manner. All issues are resolved calmly. Life is always lived in a peaceful atmosphere.

QUESTION 11

What are the benefits which observance of the morals of the Qur'an brings to the family?

The morality of the Qur'an requires respect for the mother and the father. Allah says in the Qur'an:

We have enjoined man to be good to his parents, for his mother bore him with much pain and the period of his weaning took two years: 'Give thanks to Me and to your parents. To Me shall all things return. (Surah Luqman: 14)

In a home where the morals of the Qur'an are practiced there are no fights, quarrels or conflicts. A highly respectful attitude is displayed towards the mother, the father, and the other family members. Everyone lives in a happy and joyful environment.

QUESTION 12

What are the benefits which observance of the morals of the Qur'an brings to the state system?

Allah refers in the Qur'an to obedience as a positive attribute. One who has the morals of the Qur'an would be entirely obedient and respectful towards his state. In Islamic societies, everybody works for the welfare of the state and the nation, never rebelling against the state but giving it, on the contrary, spiritual and material support.

In societies formed by Allah-fearing people, judicial cases would almost never come to court. Not even a thousandth of the legal infractions that take place in today's societies would be experienced.

Governing the state becomes much easier. Since the state does not have to deal with cases of anarchy, terrorism, mischief, and murder, all the power of the state is focused on the development and enhancement of the country, on the domestic front and abroad, which results in a very powerful state.

QUESTION 13

What are the benefits which observance of the morals of the Qur'an brings to art?

People who comply with the morals of the Qur'an value each other and try to make it possible for each other to live in an environment that is agreeable and aesthetically beautiful in every respect. Because of the longing felt for heaven, worldly means are fully utilized to create the most pleasant and cleanest of atmospheres, which address the eye, the ear, and all senses in the most beautiful way. Therefore, art and aesthetics develop in all their aspects.

Moreover, a religious person has a clean conscience. Thus there is no pressure on his mind and he can produce beautiful, unique and original works of art. Also, people working with the desire to please and present beautiful things to other religious people, act sincerely and vigorously.

QUESTION 14

What are the benefits which observance of the morals of the Qur'an brings to the school system?

First of all, living the morals of the Qur'an brings maturity and wisdom to children and youngsters. The insensitive, uncaring behaviour prevalent among young people is not present in those who abide by the Qur'an. The result is a good-natured, obedient, open minded, self-sacrificing and productive generation. The dynamism, excitement, and aggression of youth are all directed towards good deeds. A considerable assiduity and intellectual power develop. In such an environment, students give great importance to their education not only to pass examinations or escape punishment, but to contribute to their state and nation.

Disciplinary incidents in schools become unheard of. A very peaceful, constructive, and productive educational environment is formed. Cooperation develops between teachers and students based on obedience, respect, and tolerance. Also, students become extremely respectful and obedient towards the state and the police. The student demonstrations that we often see today do not take place, because there is no necessity for them.

QUESTION 15

What are the benefits which observance of the morals of the Qur'an brings to the work environment?

In societies where people lived by the morals of the Qur'an, there would be mutual understanding, cooperation, and justice in the work environment. Employers would care about the health of the employees and maintain the working environment at the most sanitary level. They would construct aesthetic and visually attractive work stations bearing in mind that employees would necessarily be working in the same environment over very long periods. They would pay them exactly what they deserve. They would not let any employee to be mistreated. They would keep themselves informed about the living conditions of the families of each employee. They would act conscientiously and ensure the protection of the employees. A situation where the powerful oppressed the weak would never develop. Also immoral behaviour like malicious gossiping, and attempts to prevent others being successful out of envy would never take place.

The relationship between the employees and the employer would be based not on self interest and cheating but on cooperation and trust. The employee would care about the interests of his company. He would not behave extravagantly, thinking, "The boss is paying for it anyway." He would always do his best, and he would never be wronged because of his good morals, but would be protected by his boss.

QUESTION 16

What is "ascribing a partner" to Allah, or idolatry?

Idolatry means considering a person or another being, or a concept as equal to or higher than Allah in terms of estimating, attributing significance, preference, and holding superior, and to act with this distorted point of view. Allah describes this situation as "associating with Allah any other God". In other words, to claim that somebody or something else has any of the attributes of Allah means ascribing a partner to Allah. Allah has proclaimed in the Qur'an that idolatry will not be forgiven:

Allah does not forgive anything being associated with Him but He forgives whoever He wills for anything other than that. Anyone who serves gods other than Allah is guilty of a terrible crime. (Surat an-Nisa: 48)

QUESTION 17

What is meant by "idolizing" something?

In conventional speech, "idolizing" only means worshipping certain things or beings. Yet, this concept has a much wider meaning and is not limited to past ages alone. In every age, there have been people who have ascribed partners to Allah, adopted other gods and worshipped idols or totem poles. It is not necessary for a person who idolizes something to say "this is a god, and I worship this" about the thing he idolizes, or to prostrate himself

in front of it.

Idolatry is basically a person's preference for something or someone over Allah. For instance, preferring someone's approval to Allah's approval, or fearing someone as one fears Allah or loving someone as one loves Allah can serve as some examples.

In the Qur'an, Allah states that the idols that people ascribe as partners to Allah will not be of any help to them.

Instead of Allah you worship only idols. You are inventing a lie. Those you worship besides Allah have no power to provide for you. So seek your provision from Allah and worship Him and give thanks to Him. It is to Him that you will be returned.' (Surat al-Ankabut: 17)

QUESTION 18

How is one saved from idolatry?

First of all, one has to confirm from his heart that Allah is the only god, all power belongs to Him, and no being other than Him can possess any power to provide help or cause harm. A person who affirms these truths conclusively serves Allah alone and never ascribes partners to Him. Allah advised people that they must turn completely to Him to be saved from idolatry.

It is Him alone you call on and, if He wills, He will relieve your affliction; then you will forget what you associated with Him (your idols). (Surat al-An'am: 41)

The radical change experienced by a person who is freed from

ascribing partners to Allah and turns to Allah, first occurs in his heart. The person who is saved from ascribing a partner to Allah gains a totally different point of view and mindset. He now leads his life which, until then, he had pursued under the sway of certain ideas and rules of ignorance, as well as his own wishes and obsessions, for Allah's approval and pleasure alone.

QUESTION 19

What does it mean to seek Allah's approval on the highest plane?

What would you do if the place you lived in suffered a flood disaster? Would you climb to the top floor and wait to be saved, or would you climb floor by floor as the waters arose? While climbing to the roof, would you use the stairs or the elevator? Obviously, the wisest thing to do at such a moment would be to choose out of all the alternatives that would save you, the one which would yield the fastest result. Any other course would be quite out of the question. The person in this situation would be considered to have done his best by reaching the top floor in the elevator. This is "choosing the best course."

The believer makes use of all his material and spiritual means, every hour and even every second of his life in accordance with the will of Allah. In doing so, if he is required to make a choice among certain alternatives, he draws on his wisdom and listens to his conscience, thus behaving in a way which would please Allah. This means that he acts in compliance with Allah's approval at the highest level.

QUESTION 20

What does having implicit faith mean?

Any individual would know without doubt that he would be burned if he stuck his hand into a fire. He would never have to think whether it was really going to get burned or not. This means that this person has the implicit belief that the fire is going to burn his hand. In the Qur'an, "implicit belief" is referred to as follows:

This (the Qur'an) is a clear insight for mankind, and guidance and a mercy for people who believe with certainty. (Surat al-Jathiyah: 20)

"Having implicit faith" means believing in Allah's existence and uniqueness, the day of resurrection, heaven and hell with absolute certainty, without any doubt, with full confidence as to their truth. It is like believing in the existence of the beings around one, whom one sees and talks to, and the intuitive knowledge demonstrated by the example of the fire given above. Faith built on believing with certainty develops in the individual a conscience which will prod him into spending every moment of his life acting in a way that will please Allah.

QUESTION 21

How do I know which one of my actions will meet with Allah's approval??

Allah always inspires the most proper course of action through the

conscience of one who fears Him. In a verse, Allah says:

You who believe! if you go in fear (taqwa) of Allah, He will give you a criterion (by which to judge between right and wrong) and will cleanse you of your sins and forgive you. Allah's favour is indeed immense. (Surat al-Anfal: 29)

It should not be forgotten that the first voice the individual hears in his heart is the voice of his conscience which helps him to judge between right and wrong, and it is this very voice which tells him the behaviour that will please Allah. People who fear Allah arrive at the truth by listening to the voice of their conscience.

QUESTION 22

Is there any other voice in a person's heart apart from that of his conscience?

All of the other alternatives that surface after the voice of one's conscience are the "voices of the self" that try to suppress the conscience. The self tries with all its might to prevent one from behaving righteously and to make one do evil deeds.

It may not do this very openly. It may outline certain excuses which may seem sensible. It may cause one to say "all this will come to nothing." Allah states this truth in the Qur'an:

"By the soul and Him that moulded it and inspired it with the knowledge of sin and piety: blessed shall be the man who has kept it pure." (Surat ash-Shams: 7-9)

As stated in the verse, man is a prey to sin but knows he has a duty

to guard against it. Man is tested on his choice between good and evil.

QUESTION 23

How do we see?

Allah brought you out of your mothers' wombs devoid of all knowledge and gave you hearing, sight and hearts so that perhaps you would give thanks. (Surat an-Nahl: 78)

The act of seeing is realised progressively. During the act of seeing, light clusters (photons) travelling from any object to the eye pass through the lens at the front of the eye where they are refracted and fall upside-down on the retina at the back of the eye. Here, impinging light is turned into electrical signals that are transmitted by neurons to a tiny spot called the centre of vision in the back of the brain. This electrical signal is perceived as an image in this centre in the brain after a series of processes. The act of seeing actually takes place in this tiny spot in the posterior part of the brain, which is pitch-dark and completely insulated from light.

When we say, “we see,” we are in fact seeing the effects of impulses reaching our eyes and induced in our brain, after they are transformed into electrical signals. That is, when we say, “we see,” we are actually observing electrical signals in our minds.

Both the book you are now reading and the boundless landscape you see when you gaze at the horizon fit into this tiny space. This adjustment in scale holds true also for the different perceptions

we obtain through our other senses.

QUESTION 24

What does matter's being a “collection of perceptions” mean?

All the information that we have about the world in which we live is conveyed to us by our five senses. The world we know of consists of what our eyes see, our hands feel, our noses smell, our tongues taste, and our ears hear. Modern research reveals that our perceptions are only responses created in the brain by electrical signals. In this regard, people, colours, the feeling of hardness, and everything we own and that we accept as the external world are only electrical signals reaching our brains.

For instance, let us take a piece of fruit: Electrical signals pertaining to the taste, smell, appearance, and hardness of the fruit, reach our brains through our nerves and build up a picture of the fruit there. If the nerves that travel to the brain were disrupted, the perceptions relating to the fruit would disappear. What we perceive as a fruit is actually a collection of perceptions reaching our brains. We can never determine that this “collection of perceptions” has a reality on the outside. We have no chance of getting outside our brains to contact anything: we have only our perceptions.

QUESTION 25

Is the existence of the external world indispensable?

We cannot know whether the external world truly exists or not. Since each object is only a collection of perceptions and those perceptions exist only in the mind, then the only world that really exists is the world of perceptions. The only world we know of is the world that exists in our minds: the one that is designed, recorded, and made vivid there; the one, in short, that is created within our minds. This is the only world of which we can be sure.

QUESTION 26

Are we deceived into believing perceptions, without any material correlates, to be real?

Yes, we are deceived into believing perceptions, without any material correlates, to be real. This is because we can never prove that the perceptions we observe in the brain have material correlates. Those perceptions could conceivably be coming from an “artificial” source. We often experience this feeling in our dreams, in which we experience events, see people, objects and settings that seem completely real. However, they are all nothing but mere perceptions. There is no basic difference between the dream and the “real world”; both of them are experienced in the brain.

QUESTION 27

If all the material entities that we know of are actually perceptions, then what is the brain?

Since our brains are a part of the physical world just like our arms, legs, or any other object, it also is a perception just like all other objects. An example about dreams will illuminate the subject further. Let us think that we see the dream. In the dream, we will have an imaginary body, an imaginary arm, an imaginary eye, and an imaginary brain. If during our dream, we were asked, “Where do you see?” we would answer “I see in my brain.” Yet, actually, there is not any brain to talk about, but an imaginary head and an imaginary brain. The seer of the images is not the imaginary brain in the dream, but a “being” that is far “beyond” it.

QUESTION 28

Who or what is the perceiver?

So far, people have believed that what does the perceiving is the brain. When we analyse the brain, however, we see that there is nothing in it but lipid and protein molecules, which also exist in other living organisms. This means that within the piece of meat we call the “brain,” there is nothing there to observe images, to constitute consciousness, or to create the being we call “myself.”

It is clear that the being that sees, hears, and feels is supra-material

in nature. This being is “alive” and it is neither matter nor an image of matter. This being associates with the perceptions in front of it by using the image of our body.

This being is the “soul.” In the Qur’an Allah states:

They will ask you about the Spirit. Say: ‘The Spirit is my Lord’s concern. You have only been given a little knowledge.’ (Surat al-Isra’: 85)

QUESTION 29

Since what we perceive as the material world is merely comprised of perceptions seen by our soul, then what is the source of these perceptions?

As has been made clear, matter does not in itself have a self-governing existence. Since matter is a perception, it is something “artificial.” That is, this perception must have been caused by another power, which means that it must have been created. It is very evident that there is a Creator, Who has created the entire material universe, that is, the sum of perceptions, and continues His creation ceaselessly. This Creator is Allah, the Omnipotent. The facts that the heavens and the earth are not stable, that their presence has only been made possible by Allah’s having created them and that they will disappear when He ends this creation, are all explained in the following verse:

It is Allah Who keeps a firm hold on the heavens and earth, preventing them from vanishing. And if they vanished, no one could then keep hold of them.

**Certainly He is Most Forbearing and Ever-Forgiving.
(Surah Fatir: 41)**

QUESTION 30

How is it that Allah encompasses everything and He is closer to us than our jugular vein?

Matter is composed only of sensations. And the only real, absolute being is Allah. This means that only Allah exists; all things except Him are shadow beings. Allah is surely “everywhere” and encompasses all. Everything that exists is an image projected to us by Allah.

Since material beings are each a perception, they cannot see Allah; but Allah sees the matter that He created in all its forms. That is, we cannot grasp Allah’s being with our eyes, but Allah has thoroughly encompassed us from the inside, from the outside, in looks and in thoughts. We cannot utter any word unless it is with His knowledge, nor can we even take a breath.

While we watch these sensory perceptions in the course of our lives, the closest being to us is not any one of these sensations, but Allah Himself. The secret of the following verse in the Qur’an is concealed in this reality:

“It is We Who created man, and We know what dark suggestions his soul makes to him: for We are nearer to him than (his) jugular vein.” (Surah Qaf: 16)

When a human being thinks that his body is made up only of “matter,” he cannot comprehend this important fact. If he takes his brain to be “himself,” then the place that he accepts to be the

outside is 20-30 cm away from him. However, when he understands that there is nothing such as matter, and that everything is imagination, notions such as outside, inside, far or near lose their meaning. Allah has encompassed him and He is “infinitely close” to him.

QUESTION 31

Is the love of Allah not sufficient? Is fear of Allah a must?

According to the Qur'an, true love requires respect and avoiding things of which Allah does not approve. When we look at the lives and actions of people who believe that love alone is enough, we see that they are not steadfast on the point mentioned above. However, a person who loves Allah sincerely, primarily follows His commands strictly, avoids the things He prohibits and is guided towards actions of which He approves. He shows his love by seeking his Lord's approval at every moment of his life by his deep respect for, trust in, obedience and loyalty to Him.

As a result of such concern, he deeply fears losing Allah's approval and incurring His wrath. Otherwise, expressing one's love only in words, while living a heedless life, transgressing Allah's limits, is certainly a very insincere attitude. In the Qur'an Allah has ordered man to fear Him:

Turn back in repentance to Him, and fear Him: perform salat (regular prayers), and do not be of those who ascribe partners to Allah. (Surat ar-Rum)

QUESTION 32

How intense must the fear of Allah of a sincere believer be?

Everyone who is aware of the being of Allah and who knows Him with His supreme attributes fears Allah deeply. This is because in addition to being infinitely compassionate and merciful, Allah is also al-Qahhar (the Subduer), al-Hasib (the Reckoner), al-Muazzib (the Punisher), al-Muntaqim (the Avenger), al-Saiq (the One Who consigns to Hell). Therefore, Muslims fear Allah in the unseen; they know no one is safe from His punishment. Since they know that they will be accountable for everything they do, they greatly avoid behaving in any way displeasing to Allah. However, it must be added that fear, as referred to here, has a totally different connotation from the typical fear felt in irreligious societies. It is a fear that gives peace to the believer, motivates him and prods him to action to gain Allah's approval. Allah commanded the believers as follows:

So fear Allah as much as you can, and listen and obey and spend in charity for the benefit of your own soul. It is the people who are safeguarded from the avarice of their own selves who are successful. (Surat at-Taghabun: 16)

QUESTION 33

Anyone who reads the Qur'an can understand it, can't he?

Allah has sent down the Qur'an to all people as a guide. This is why the Qur'an is extremely comprehensible and clear. Allah thus stresses this characteristic of the Qur'an: "A Light has come to you from Allah and a Clear Book." (Surat al-Ma'ida: 15) Another verse further clarifies this:

In this way We have sent it (the Qur'an) down with Clear Signs. Allah guides anyone He wills. (Surat al-Hajj: 16)

Yet, to be able to see the wisdom in the Qur'an and to comprehend its supreme features, one who reads it must be a hundred percent sincere and always think in accordance with his conscience.

QUESTION 34

I can read the Qur'an all the time, can't I?

The Qur'an is the only guide a believer will have recourse to throughout his life. In a verse of the Qur'an where Allah addressed the wives of the Prophet, He commanded them to "remember the Signs of Allah and the wise words which are recited in their homes..." (Surat al-Ahzab: 34), and urged all believers to recite the Qur'an. As this verse makes clear, the believers read the scriptures in their homes and remember their verses. However,

more important is reading and then fully practicing and diligently carrying out the Qur'an's injunctions.

QUESTION 35

The Qur'an addresses every age, doesn't it?

Allah sent down the Qur'an as a guide for all worlds and all times:

This is a clear explanation for all mankind, and guidance and admonition for those who fear Allah. (Surat Al-Imran: 138)

Allah gives examples in the Qur'an based on past events so that people who live throughout the ages may take warning and not repeat the same mistakes. One may commonly encounter events similar to those recounted in the Qur'an even today.

QUESTION 36

The verses of the Qur'an have been preserved by Allah until today without any change, haven't they?

The Qur'an is protected by Allah and has come down to our day without any change for the past 1400 years. Allah informs us of this truth:

It is We Who have sent down the Reminder (the

Qur'an) and We Who will preserve it. (Surat al-Hijr)

The Words of your Lord are perfect in truthfulness and justice. No one can change His Words. He is the All-Hearing, and the All-Knowing. (Surat al-An'am: 115)

These promises of Allah are sufficient for those who believe. Yet, Allah has shown us that the Qur'an is the book of truth by including certain scientific and numerical miracles in it.

QUESTION 37

What are the scientific miracles of the Qur'an?

Although the Qur'an was revealed 1400 years ago, it includes many scientific facts which were absolutely unknown at that time and have been discovered only in our day by the help of the latest scientific and technological means. These attributes of the Qur'an clearly demonstrate that it originated in Allah. The following are some of these miracles.

| The constant expansion of the universe is one of the greatest discoveries of the 20th century. Yet Allah proclaimed this truth to us 1400 years ago in the 47th verse of Surat adh-Dhariyat:

It is We who have built the universe with (Our creative) power, and, truly, it is We who are steadily expanding it. (Surat adh-Dhariyat: 47)

| The movement of heavenly bodies in unchanging orbits was proclaimed centuries ago in the Qur'an:

It is He who created night and day and the sun and

moon, each one moving in its own orbit. (Surat al-Anbiya: 33)

| Interesting properties are revealed when the Arabic wording of the verses that make mention of the sun and the moon is examined. In these verses, the words siraj (lamp) and wahhaj (brightly-burning) are used for the sun. For the moon, the word «munir» (enlightening, shiny) is used. Indeed, while the sun produces an enormous amount of heat and light as a result of the nuclear reactions inside, the moon merely reflects the light it receives from the sun. This distinction is made as follows:

Do you not see how God has created seven heavens in full harmony with one another, and has made the moon a light therein, and made the sun a (radiant) lamp? (Surah Nuh: 15-16)

| In the Qur'an, the 22nd verse of Surat al-Hijr refers to the "fertilizing" property of the winds:

And We send the fertilizing winds, then cause water to descend from the sky, therewith providing you with water (in abundance). (Surat al-Hijr: 22)

In Arabic, the word "fertilizing" refers to the effect on both plants and clouds. Modern science for its part has shown that the winds do indeed have both of these functions.

| Another miracle of the Qur'an is emphasized in the following verse:

He has created the Heavens and the Earth for the sake of Truth. He wraps the night up in the day, and wraps the day up in the night... (Surat az-Zumar: 5)

In this verse, the day's and the night's wrapping each other up is described by the word "tekvir". In English, this means «to make one thing lap over another, folded up like a garment that is laid away». In Arabic dictionaries this word is explained as the action

of wrapping one thing around another, in the way that a turban is put on. Implicit in this verse, therefore, is accurate information about the shape of the world. The expression used can be truly apt only if the earth is round. This means that in the Qur'an, which was revealed in the 7th century, the roundness of the world was hinted at.

QUESTION 38

Is there a numerical coding system in the Qur'an?

The Qur'an also has numerical miracles like the insertion of the number "19" in the verses in a coded way and the numbers of repetitions of certain words.

Word repetitions in the Qur'an: Some related words are repeated the same number of times in the Qur'an. For instance:

1. The phrase the "seven heavens" is repeated 7 times.
2. The words, "world " and "hereafter" are each repeated 115 times.
3. The word "day" is repeated 365 times while the word "moon" is repeated 12 times.
4. The word "faith" (iman) (without genitive) is repeated 25 times throughout the Qur'an, as is also the word "infidelity" or the phrase "covering over the truth." (kufr).

5. When we count the word "say", we come up with the result of 332. We arrive at the same figure when we count the number of times the phrase: "they said" is used.

6 The word "shaytan" is used 88 times. The word "angel" is also repeated 88 times.

The miracle of 19 in the Qur'an: The number 19 is pointed out in the Qur'an in a statement about Hell: "It is guarded by nineteen keepers." (Surat al-Muddaththir: 30). This number is also encoded in certain other verses of the Qur'an. For instance:

"In the Name of God, The Compassionate, the Merciful." This formula, which is found at the beginning of every surah, has 19 letters.

The Qur'an consists of 114 surahs; 114 is a multiple of 19, being equal to 6 times 19.

There are many other such multiples:

The total count of the word "Allah" in the Qur'an is 2698 (19 x 142);

The total count of the word "Merciful" in the Qur'an is 114 (19 x 6);

When we add up all numbers in the Qur'an (without taking repetitions into account), we get the number 162, 146 that is, 19 x 8534;

The first Surah that was revealed had 19 verses.

There are innumerable other examples.

QUESTION 39

How do we know of the existence of the hereafter?

Allah currently causes people to live in a world of perceptions. Allah, Who created this world,—such a perfect and magnificent creation with three dimensional images that have depth, and are full of colour and light—surely has the power to create that which is far more beautiful.

Just as Allah forms an image of the world in man's brain, so will He transfer him to another dimension after his death and will show him the image of a different environment. That dimension, to which man will be introduced, will be the hereafter.

QUESTION 40

Is there something called reincarnation?

Reincarnation is a baseless superstition. It was produced as a result of the concern felt by certain irreligious people in their subconscious about “disappearing after death” or the fear that grips people with poor religious faith when they think about going to the hereafter after death. For either group, it is an attractive prospect to come back to the world once again after death.

However, in many verses of the Qur'an, it is stated that there is only one life in this world where man is tested. It is also stated that there is no return to the world after death. That man will die

only once is emphasized in the following verse:

They will not taste any death there – except for the first one. Your Lord will through His mercy safeguard them from the punishment of the Blazing Fire. (Surat ad-Dukhan: 56)

QUESTION 41

Is death a disappearance?

Death is not a disappearance for man. It is a transfer to the abode of the hereafter, which is the real truth. Death disconnects one's relation to the setting of this world and the body present in this setting. When the connection between the body and the soul is cut off and the soul starts to come in contact with the images of the hereafter, that is when man dies; the curtain in front of his eyes is lifted and he realizes that death is not a disappearance as he thought. Just as he starts the day every morning waking up from sleep, so does he start living in the hereafter, resurrected after his death. It is as proclaimed in the verse: “It is He who gives life and causes to die. When He decides on something, He just says to it, ‘Be!’ and it is.” The transfer of man to the hereafter happens with a single command of this type uttered by Allah. (Surah Ghafir: 68)

QUESTION 42

What does one experience at the moment of death?

**Or do those who perpetrate evil deeds suppose that
We will make them like those who believe and do right
actions, so that their lives and deaths will be the same?
How bad their judgement is! (Surat al-Jathiyah)**

How the spiritual death of man takes place has been described in detail in the Qur'an, in which it is made clear that it is different from the clinical death of the body. It is stated that certain events take place at the moment of death which are seen by the dying person but not by others.

For instance, an unbeliever who has not been able to make a just estimate of the existence of Allah may seem to have died peacefully in his sleep. But, in reality, his soul that makes the transition into another dimension experiences death in great pain. Or, in just the opposite case, the soul of a believer who is thought to be suffering is in fact gently taken out of his body by the angels, as is related in the scriptures.

The events the unbelievers and the believers respectively experience during their deaths are completely different from each other. In the Quran, it is stated that at the moment of death the unbelievers will experience the following:

Their souls will be taken by hitting them on their backs and faces.

They will suffer the throes of death.

Angels will give them the news of eternal torment.

Their souls will be pulled out of their bodies.

As for the believers:

Their souls will be gently taken away from their bodies.

They will be welcomed by the angels with kindness and greetings.

As the angels take their souls they will give them the news of Paradise.

QUESTION 43

Is the universe mortal too?

Allah states that apart from all the created things in the universe, the universe itself will also die. All animals die, plants die, people die. Planets also die. So do the stars and suns. All material beings die on the day of resurrection and they are destroyed. The day of resurrection which brings the death of the universe will be an event greater than anything experienced by man before. This event is referred to in the Qur'an as follows:

**Yet man still wants to deny what is ahead of him,
asking, 'So when is the Day of Rising?'**

But when the eyesight is dazzled,

and the moon is eclipsed,

and the sun and moon are fused together,

on that Day man will ask: 'Where can I run?'

No indeed! There will be no safe place.

That Day the only resting place will be your Lord.

**That Day man will be told what he did and failed to do.
(Surat al-Qiyamah: 13)**

QUESTION 44

Will everyone who has ever lived until the day of resurrection experience it or will only those who are alive at that moment experience it?

The day of resurrection starts by the blowing of the trumpet. Along with a great quake and a deafening blast, all people on the earth realize that they are going to face a horrible disaster. The earth and the sky are rent apart and the physical universe dies. No live being is left on the earth. When the trumpet is blown a second time, people are resurrected and they are pulled out of their graves. (Surat az-Zumar: 39:68)

All the people who have ever been created witness the events that develop after resurrection.

However, Allah has stated that He will keep the believers in safety and peace and will relieve them of the fear of the day of resurrection:

Those who perform good actions will receive better than them and will be safe that Day from terror. (Surat an-Naml: 89)

QUESTION 45

What kind of a reckoning will there be on the Day of Reckoning?

On the Day of Reckoning, everyone will be individually judged. In the first stage of reckoning, everything a man has done throughout his life will be shown without anything being withheld:

“...even if something weighs as little as a mustard-seed and is inside a rock or anywhere else in the heavens or earth, Allah will bring it out. Allah is All-Pervading, All-Aware.” (Surah Luqman: 16).

Nothing a person has done will remain a secret.

One may forget what he did in the world of this life, but Allah does not forget any of his deeds and brings them before him on the day of reckoning. Everybody will be given the record of his deeds on the day of reckoning. At the same time, the scales of justice that weigh the good and evil deeds of man are brought in and no one is wronged by so much as the smallest speck. During the reckoning, the human being's hearing, his sight and his skin will testify against him and those who have witnessed what he has done in the life of this world will be brought in to testify. The unbelievers will be driven into hell after a dreadful reckoning. But the believers will be given an easy reckoning, after which they will enter heaven with all the joy and excitement of a great victory.

QUESTION 46

Can people take the responsibility for one another's sins?

Allah has proclaimed in the Qur'an that everybody will be held accountable for what he has done. Everyone will be made to see what he has done in the world, one by one, and no one will be able to help another. This truth is stated in the Qur'an as follows:

No burden-bearer can bear another's burden. If someone who is weighed down calls for help to bear his load, none of it will be borne for him, even by his next of kin... (Surat al-Fatir: 18)

QUESTION 47

Can a human being have the chance to make up for what he has done when he sees the truth in the hereafter?

On that day, it is impossible to make up for anything. To believe after death will not lead anyone to success. As is also stated in the Quran, the unbelievers will beg to be allowed to do everything demanded of them on the day of reckoning, but nothing will be accepted from them any more. They will wish to go back to the world and do righteous deeds but their wishes will be refused. When they realize that there is no possibility of atonement, the unbelievers will feel an unbearable regret. The feelings of hopelessness and regret experienced there is incomparable to anything in this world, because the unbelievers will realize that

they will live in the punishment of hell forever, without the slightest hope of escape:

If only you could see them standing before the Fire, saying, 'Oh! If only we could be sent back again, we would not deny the Signs of our Lord and we would be among those who believe.' No, it is simply that what they were concealing before has been shown to them; and if they were sent back, they would merely return to what they were forbidden to do. Truly, they are liars. They say, 'There is nothing but this life and we will not be raised again.' If only you could see them when they are standing before their Lord. He will say, 'Is this not the Truth?' They will say, 'Yes indeed, by our Lord!' He will say, 'Then taste Our punishment because you rejected the Faith.' (Surat al-An'am: 27-30)

QUESTION 48

What kind of a place is Hell?

For unbelievers, Hell is a place where there are all kinds of distress, torment and punishment which last forever. In the Qur'an, it is said of Hell:

Hell lies in wait—a homecoming for the profligate who shall remain in it for ages, not tasting any coolness there or any drink, except for boiling water and decaying filth—a fitting recompense. (Surat al-Naba': 21-26)

QUESTION 49

What do the verses of the Qur'an tell us about Hell?

In the verses of the Qur'an, it is related that there is literally a life in Hell. But it is a life in which all kinds of humiliation, misery, disgrace, physical and psychological torture are experienced.

By the given standards of life in this world, man cannot fully comprehend the punishment of Hell. The unbelievers undergo great punishment in hell in every respect, both physically and spiritually. Moreover, there is never any interruption in or lessening of this punishment:

But no! Hell is a Raging Blaze stripping away the limbs and scalp, which claims all who drew back and turned away, and amassed wealth and hoarded it up. (Surat al-Ma'arij: 15-18)

QUESTION 50

What kind of a place is Paradise?

Paradise is a place where those who have observed the verses of the Qur'an, obeyed Allah's orders and lived their lives to gain His approval, will live forever in happiness, possessing everything they want. In paradise, man will be able to instantly enjoy whatever beauty he may think of and do anything he wants, whenever he wants. Paradise holds everything man's self may desire and enjoy, and even more. The generous recompense the

believers will receive there is related in these verses:

My servants, you will feel no fear today; you will know no sorrow.

As for those who believed in Our Signs and became Muslims:

Enter the Garden, you and your wives, delighting in your joy.

Platters and cups of gold will be passed around among you and you will have there all that the heart desires and the eye finds delight in. You will remain in it timelessly, forever.

That is the Garden you will inherit for what you did. (Surat az-Zukhruf: 68-72)

QUESTION 51

Who goes to Paradise?

...Allah has inscribed faith upon such people's hearts and will reinforce them with a spirit of His own and admit them into Gardens with rivers flowing under them. There they shall remain timelessly, forever. Allah is pleased with them and they are pleased with Him. Such people are of the party of Allah. Truly, it is the party of Allah who are successful. (Surat al-Mujadilah: 22)

Some other qualities of the believers to whom Allah promises Heaven are stated in the Qur'an as follows:

those who believe and do good works (Surat al-Baqarah: 25),

those who go in fear (taqwa) of Allah (Surat al 'Imran: 15),

those who control their rage (Surat al 'Imran: 134),

those who do not knowingly persist in their misdeeds. (Surat al 'Imran: 135),

those who obey Allah and His Messenger (Surat an-Nisa: 13),

those who say their prayers (salat) regularly and give in charity (zakat) regularly, and believe in Allah's Messengers and respect and support them (Surat al-Ma'idah: 12),

those who are sincere (Surat al-Ma'idah: 119),

those who do good (Surah Yunus: 26),

those who humble themselves before their Lord (Surah Hud: 23),

those who repent (Surah Maryam: 60),

those who honour their trusts and their contracts (Surat al-Muminun: 8),

those who say their prayers (salat) regularly (Surat al-Muminun: 9),

those who outdo each other in goodness (Surah Fatir: 32),

those who turn to Allah in sincere repentance (Surah Qaf: 32),

those who fear the All-Merciful in the Unseen and come with a heart turned in devotion to Him. (Surah Qaf: 33).

QUESTION 52

What is true virtue?

In any society, there is a general concept of "virtue" established by its members. People who give money to beggars, behave to others in a friendly manner and, try to help them with their petty problems are considered "virtuous people". Yet, the virtue with which Allah will be pleased is not a concept limited to such matters. A truly "virtuous person" is one who believes in Allah with a sincere heart and organizes his life in a way of which Allah will approve. In the Qur'an, Allah has explained what true virtue is:

It is not a virtue to turn your faces to the East or to the West. Rather, the truly virtuous are those who believe in Allah and the Last Day, the Angels, the Book and the Prophets, and who, despite their love for it, give away their wealth to their relatives and to orphans and the very poor, and to travellers and beggars and to set servants free, and who say their prayers (salat) and give in charity (zakat) regularly; those who honour their contracts when they make them, and are steadfast in poverty and illness and in times of war. Those are the people who are true believers. They are the people who are the Allah-fearing. (Surat al-Baqara: 177)

QUESTION 53

What is the concept of love in the Qur'an?

In societies which do not live according to the Qur'an, very different values can cause people to feel love and respect towards each other, like sharing the same culture, holding a title, being beautiful, or dressing smartly. Yet, the real goal of the believers is the approval of Allah. Because of their love for Allah, they also feel love and affection towards that which Allah created. Therefore, they can never be on friendly terms with a person with whom Allah is not pleased, nor can they feel any love or affection towards that person in their hearts. This is stated in the Qur'an:

You will not find people who believe in Allah and the Last Day having any regard for anyone who opposes Allah and His Messenger, though they be their fathers, their sons, their brothers or their nearest kindred.
(S u r a t
al-Mujadilah: 22)

QUESTION 54

What is the reason for believers to be together all the time?

Allah orders believers in many verses of the Qur'an to be together and not to turn away from believers by desiring the life of this world:

Hold fast to the rope of Allah all together, and do not

separate. Remember Allah's blessing to you when you were enemies and He joined your hearts together so that you became brothers by His blessing. You were on the very brink of the pit of the Fire and He rescued you from it. In this way Allah makes His Signs clear to you, so that hopefully you will be guided. (Surat Al Imran: 103)

A person who lives according to the Qur'an is surely bound to obey these commands of Allah like all of Allah's other commands. To be with the believers is a great blessing and a support for every human being. For instance, after Allah gave Musa the responsibility of prophethood, Musa asked for his brother Harun to be a helper to him. Believers always remind each other about Allah, they forbid one another to commit evil acts or make mistakes, they help each other and cooperate in every way possible. Also, of all people, believers are the ones who have the highest moral standards and who always act conscientiously. Therefore, the most peaceful environments are those in which the believers live together.

QUESTION 55

What kind of a life has Allah promised the believers in this world?

The lives of those who believe in Allah in this world are beautiful in every respect, just as their lives will be in the hereafter. Allah gives the good news to those who act righteously that they will also be rewarded generously in this world:

To all those, male or female, who, being believers, act rightly, We will give a good life and We will recompense

them according to their noblest deeds. (Surat an-Nahl: 97)

“If My servants ask you about Me, I am indeed close (to them). I answer the call of the caller when he calls on Me...” (Surat al-Baqara: 186)

Allah states in the Qur’an that He will respond to the oppressed and distressed when they call on Him, provided that the suppliant truly and sincerely wants what he prays for.

However, it must not be forgotten that people may not always identify what is favorable and good for them. It may be that something that we imagine to be good for us is not so. Since Allah knows that we are not fully knowledgeable and keeps everything under His control, He may on some occasions refuse to grant a prayer, but may give us a greater blessing when the time is ripe. Besides, man is created with a hasty nature and sometimes he is over eager to have everything he wants realized. Allah may then delay His response to a prayer. In that case, the suppliant has to be patient and await Allah’s will.

QUESTION 56

How does one pray to Allah? Is there a specific place, time or form of prayer?

There is no specific place, time or way of praying to Allah. Allah is closer to us than our jugular vein and He knows and sees everything that crosses our minds, everything that we think, everything in our subconscious, and everything else too. Therefore, we can call to Allah and ask for His help at any time – while walking, working at something, eating, sitting, or standing. Allah defines what the attitude of one who prays should be:

“Call on your Lord humbly and secretly.” (Surat al-A’raf: 55)

What is important is that one who prays must turn to Allah alone and be sincere.

QUESTION 58

How does one repent to Allah? Is saying “I repent” enough?

It is enough for man to say sincerely that he repents to Allah for his sins and mistakes, ask forgiveness from Allah and pledge not to repeat them again. Allah says:

But if anyone repents after his wrongdoing and amends his conduct, Allah will turn towards him. Allah is Ever-Forgiving and Most Merciful. (Surat al-Ma’ida: 39)

QUESTION 57

Does Allah accept every prayer?

Allah hears the call of everyone and responds to whoever invokes His name. He has stated this truth thus:

QUESTION 59

Does Allah accept every act or profession of repentance?

Allah accepts every sincere form of repentance which involves the offender pledging not to repeat his mistake and subsequently amending his conduct. The greatness or the pettiness of the sin makes no difference. The important thing is deciding to root out bad attitudes. Allah's verdict regarding repentance is as follows:

Allah only accepts the repentance of those who do evil in ignorance and then quickly repent after doing it. Allah turns towards such people in mercy. Allah is All-Knowing and All-Wise. (Surat an-Nisa': 17)

QUESTION 60

Is it right to think that since Allah is going to forgive me when I repent, I can do anything and then repent?

This is an extremely insincere thought which causes many people to go wrong. Allah knows all hearts and the secrets hidden in them. Allah may have proclaimed that He will accept the repentance of those who truly regret their deeds and who decisively correct their conduct, but those who commit sins thinking, "Allah will forgive me anyway" will nevertheless have to account in the hereafter for everything they have done and they will be recompensed or punished accordingly.

Of no effect is the repentance of those who persist in doing evil until death comes to them and who then say, 'Now we repent', nor of people who die rejecting faith. We have prepared for them a painful punishment. (Surat an-Nisa': 18)

QUESTION 61

What does a person who starts living his religion have to change about himself?

In addition to obeying Allah's orders and performing the rites of worship, the most important change a person who starts living his religion should make is adopt a life built on good morals by always following his conscience. Everyone will have the character and way of life he adopted before becoming acquainted with religion. However, when he starts living his religion, he must perpetuate his good character traits for the approval of Allah, and immediately abandon those that do not meet the standards of the Qur'an, or remould them in line with the morals of the Qur'an. True believers will not have different world views, life styles or viewpoints. The only criterion for them is the Qur'an and the only models to be followed are the prophets and righteous believers whom Allah gives as examples in the Qur'an.

QUESTION 62

After I start living Islam, will I be responsible before Allah for the sins I have committed in my past life?

Before he is warned, a person would be considered ignorant about religion, with no knowledge of what is right or wrong. Therefore, if he repents and does not revert to the same sins and mistakes and seeks forgiveness from Allah, he will not be held responsible for his sinful past. What is important in Allah's sight is not to try to justify any mistakes or sins. Allah has given the believers this good news:

As for those who believe and do good deeds, We will cleanse them of their sins, and recompense them for the best of their deeds. (Surat al-'Ankabut: 7)

QUESTION 63

Is it necessary to explain the morals of Islam to others?

Allah holds it the responsibility of all people to live the religion of Islam. Everyone who is aware of the existence of the religion will be asked in the hereafter whether he has abided by the Qur'an or not. Therefore, those who live Allah's religion must convey the good morals laid down by religion to other people, inviting them to the righteous way, urging them to do right and forbidding them to do wrong. In the Qur'an, Allah gave the following

commandment:

Let there be a community among you who call to the good, and enjoin the right, and forbid the wrong. They are the ones who achieve success. (Surat Al 'Imran: 104)

QUESTION 64

In what sense does Allah appreciate patience?

The religion of Islam advises man to be patient for Allah's sake. In a verse, it is commanded: "Be steadfast for your Lord." (Surat al- Muddaththir: 7) One of the most significant qualities of man which is inseparable from the good morals he upholds and the good deeds he performs to gain Allah's approval is patience.

Yet, we must distinguish between patience and "tolerance". Tolerance is the virtue of enduring any inconvenience that is unpleasant or painful. However, patience, as referred to in the Qur'an, is not a source of difficulty for the believer. The believer exercises patience in order to gain the approval of Allah, therefore he does not suffer any distress because of his patience; on the contrary, he derives spiritual pleasure from it.

Also, patience is an attribute that covers all the characteristics of a believer as set forth in the Qur'an, for a person may be humble, generous, sacrificing and obedient, but these qualities will be truly valuable only if he perseveres with patience in maintaining them. This means that patience is an attribute which renders all other attributes of a believer valuable and valid.

QUESTION 65

What does “putting trust in Allah” mean?

Putting trust in Allah is counting on Allah knowing that everything on the earth takes place under Allah’s control and that no one can help or harm the individual unless He so wills. The believers know that Allah is the Almighty and anything He desires will happen just by His saying “Be!” and they never lose heart in the face of difficulties. They know that Allah will help them no matter what, and that He wishes comfort for them in this world and in the hereafter. They live a life of inner peace and joy caused by this awareness.

What falls to a believer is just to give the reactions Allah wants him to give and to wait the result from Allah. In a verse, this great secret only understood by the believers is explained as follows:

...Whoever goes in fear of Allah—He will give him a means of salvation and provide for him from sources which he does not expect. Whoever puts his trust in Allah—He will be enough for him. Allah always achieves His aim. Allah has appointed a measure for all things. (Surat at-Talaq: 2-3)

QUESTION 66

What is taqwa? Who are those who have taqwa?

Taqwa (piety) is to abide by the commands and recommendations

of Allah and to avoid adverse thoughts and acts. The believers who believe with certainty and who show unremitting perseverance in this are called “the pious ones” in the Qur’an. Allah informs us of the significance of piety:

...Provide well for yourselves; but the best provision is piety. So fear Me, those of you who are endowed with intelligence! (Surat al-Baqara: 197)

QUESTION 67

What is superiority based on in the eyes of Allah?

In the eyes of Allah, superiority is not based on the possessions, position, beauty or anything else a person may possess, but only on his nearness to Allah, that is, his piety:

Mankind! We created you from a male and female, and made you into peoples and tribes so that you might come to know each other. The noblest among you in Allah’s sight is the one with the greatest piety. Allah is All-Knowing and All-Aware. (Surat al-Hujurat)

QUESTION 68

What is deep thinking?

One of the most important characteristics of those who believe in

Allah is their ability to see the signs created by Allah. A believer sees the power and artistry of Allah in every subtlety around him, he glorifies His praise and takes this as a way to draw nearer to him. Believers having this characteristic are thus defined in the Qur'an:

Those who remember Allah, standing, sitting and lying on their sides, and reflect on the creation of the heavens and the earth: 'Our Lord, You have not created this for nothing. Glory be to You! So safeguard us from the punishment of the Fire.' (Surat Al 'Imran: 191)

Allah emphasizes the importance of deep thinking to the believers in many places in the Qur'an with the phrases "Will you not reflect?", "There are signs for those who reflect". The subjects to be reflected on are unlimited. A believer ponders upon many subjects, like the extraordinary order in universe, the living beings on the earth, the perfect systems in these living beings, any event he experiences, the blessings Allah creates ceaselessly, disasters sent down to the unbelievers, Paradise, Hell, and eternity, and with profound thinking, he makes a better appraisal of the existence, might and infinite wisdom of Allah.

QUESTION 69

Religion and science are in agreement, aren't they?

Religion never conflicts with science. Allah created both religion and science, therefore any discord or conflict between them is impossible. In the Qur'an which Allah sent down 1,400 years ago,

there are certain scientific explanations which have now been verified by means of 20th century technology. The claim that religion conflicts with science is a lie made up by those who deny Allah, with the purpose of creating doubt in people's minds about religion.

QUESTION 70

Who are the scientists who believe in Allah and religion?

Many people who do scientific research see with their own eyes and in full detail the extraordinarily complex structures and the perfect order in living beings, and the great harmony between them. These people inevitably come to the realization of the existence and greatness of Allah. This truth is pointed out by the following verse:

...Only those of His servants with knowledge go in fear of Allah... (Surah Fatir: 28)

Unsurprisingly, many renowned scientists of our day and the past are known by their belief and devotion to Allah and religion. Some of these scientists are: Einstein, Newton, Galileo, Max Planck, Kelvin, Maxwell, Kepler, William Thompson, Robert Boyle, Iona William Petty, Michael Faraday, Gregory Mendel, Louis Pasteur, John Dalton, Blaise Pascal, John Ray.

In our day, many scientists confirm the existence of Allah and more, they see science as a means of becoming acquainted with Allah. In particular, the "Creationism" or "Conscious Design"

trends that have become prevalent in the USA are indications of this.

QUESTION 71

How does one give thanks to Allah?

To give thanks for all the blessings Allah has given is an important act of worship. In addition to the verbal expression of thanks, using Allah's blessings in a way that He will be pleased, for charity and good purposes without being extravagant, will also be giving thanks through one's deeds. Also, the individual must know that he needs everything coming from Allah, nothing he owns belongs to him, and everything has been given to him by Allah, and he must at all times give thanks for these things. It is stated in the Qur'an:

So eat the good and lawful (halal) things that Allah has provided for you, and be thankful for the blessing of Allah if you truly worship Him. (Surat an-Nahl: 114)

QUESTION 72

What kind of a being is Satan?

Satan is one of the jinn Allah created. After Allah created Adam, who was the first human being, Allah ordered all the angels to

prostrate themselves before Adam. Only Satan among them did not obey Allah's order, because he was boastful and said:

My Lord, because You misled me, I will make things on the earth seem good to mankind and I will mislead them all, every one of them. (Surat al-Hijr: 39)

Satan, who was expelled out of the sight of Allah, asked Allah to give him time until the day of resurrection to keep all of mankind away from Allah's path and to misguide them all. In the meantime, Satan will try to cause people go astray from Allah's path and he will do his best to achieve this. Therefore, Satan is the greatest danger to the successful after life of every human being and he is thus everyone's greatest enemy.

QUESTION 73

How does Satan reach people? By what methods does he try to make them stray from their course?

Allah mentions in the Qur'an that Satan whispers evil suggestions in people's hearts:

Believers are advised to seek refuge in Allah "from the evil of the surreptitious whisperer who whispers in people's breasts." (Surat an-Nas: 4).

This is the most insidious tactic of Satan. Most people do not realize that the thoughts in their minds are from Satan. They think that all their thoughts are their own. For instance, someone who is just learning religion is an important target for Satan. He may make religion seem difficult to this person. Or He may tell him

that what he already does is enough and more is not required. This person may think that all this is true. Or Satan induces feelings like fear, anxiety, stress, and distress in people, which exhausts their energy. He tries to prevent them from doing good and charitable deeds and thinking soundly.

Furthermore, it must not be forgotten that Satan's influence on people lies at the root of all evil, wars, massacres and debauchery in the world.

QUESTION 74

Does Satan have independent power of his own?

The most important point to be grasped about Satan is that he has no power of his own. Like all other beings, he has also been created by Allah and is under His control. He can do nothing unless Allah so wills. Satan performs his task of causing people to go astray with the permission of Allah. In this way, Allah tests who will and who will not obey Satan in the life of this world, which He created to test people. Allah states this truth:

He had no authority over them except insofar as We might be enabled to distinguish one who believes in the hereafter from one who is in doubt about it. Your Lord is the Preserver of all things. (Surah Saba': 21)

QUESTION 75

On whom does Satan have no influence?

Satan can have no influence on true believers. Allah tells us of this truth in the 99th and 100th verses of Surat an-Nahl:

He has no authority only over those who believe and who put their trust in their Lord. He has authority only over those who take him as a friend and who associate others with Allah. (Surat an-Nahl: 99-100)

QUESTION 76

What is "the religion of the ignorant?"

Do they then seek the judgement of the Time of Ignorance? Who could be better at giving judgement than Allah for those whose faith is steadfast? (Surah al-Ma'ida: 50)

There is a common "religion" on earth that all people, regardless of their ideologies, philosophies or world views, who have strayed from the religion of truth, adopt. This religion is conformed to in all societies where the religion of truth is not adhered to. In such societies, people accept the value judgements, moral norms and mindset offered by this religion as a result of the intense inculcation they receive from their environment from the moment they come into this world. The name of this religion is "the religion of the ignorant".

The basic characteristic of people who live the religion of the
Quick Grasp of Faith ■ 71

ignorant is their seeking the approval of the society they live in rather than the approval of Allah, and their building their lives around the axis of this aim.

What is expected of the individuals living in such societies is to “become a man.” What is meant by the term “to become a man” is to adopt certain type of morals, culture, attitude and manners commonly accepted by society and to exhibit certain traits that are favoured by the members of this society.

QUESTION 77

Is a system practiced by the majority always right?

The conventional wisdom of societies that are far removed from Allah’s religion holds that the majority is always right. Yet this is a totally wrong deduction. Allah has informed us in the Qur’an that, “Most people will not become believers...” (Surah Yusuf: 103) and He has stated at other points in His verses that those who follow the unbelieving majority will also be the losers. From the foregoing, we understand that in every age the believers will be in the minority, and those standing apart from Allah’s religion will be in the majority. This situation will increase the value of those who believe in Allah and who live away from the “religion of the ignorant” many times over.

QUESTION 78

What does one have to do to renounce “the religion of the ignorant”?

The way to be saved from this system built on the denial of Allah is, first and foremost, to seek the approval of Allah alone and to try to strictly practice the morals and the way of life He presents to us in the Qur’an. One who patterns his entire life on the guidance of the verses of the Qur’an automatically distances himself from the bad morality and the disagreeable modes of behaviour of a society marred by ignorance of religion.

QUESTION 79

It is emphasized that believers are wise. What is the difference between wisdom and intelligence?

Wisdom is an important quality possessed only by believers. However, there is a great difference between the concept of wisdom as it commonly figures in society and the wisdom presented by religion. The wisdom referred to in the Qur’an is a concept totally different from intelligence. Intelligence is the brain capacity a human being biologically possesses. Intelligence neither increases nor decreases. Wisdom, on the other hand, is granted to believers, who are pious and who fear Allah, as a great blessing. The level of wisdom of the individual increases in parallel with his piety.

The primary characteristics of a man of wisdom is his fearing Allah and observing his duty to Him, following his conscience all the time, evaluating everything he sees according to the Qur'an and seeking Allah's approval every moment. No individual, be he the most intelligent, most knowledgeable and most intellectual person on earth, will possess "wisdom" if he lacks these qualities, and, lacking the ability to understand, he will not be able to see many truths. Allah has described what damage is done by a lack of wisdom:

The worst of beasts in Allah's sight are the deaf and dumb who do not use their reason. (Surat al-Anfal: 22)

A man of wisdom also has vision. He makes correct and proper decisions. Wisdom enables him to have a grasp of the essence of events and to see the inner truth of things.

QUESTION 80

What are the factors clouding man's wisdom?

What vitiates a man's heart and mind are his ambitions and selfish desires. For example, fears about the future, jealousy, strong obsessions felt for worldly things, and romanticism so preoccupy people that they are prevented from thinking about the really important things, such as the greatness of Allah and the perfection in His creation. Allah has advised us that success will be possible only by breaking free from the obsessions of the self:

...It is the people who are safeguarded from the avarice of their own selves who are successful. (Surat al-Hashr: 9)

QUESTION 81

It is stated in the Qur'an that Allah does not like those who are boastful. What is 'being boastful' according to the Qur'an?

According to the Qur'an, the foremost characteristic of a person who is boastful is his forgetting that everything he owns has been given to him by Allah, and in his imagined superiority, boasting about these things. An important misconception on this subject is thinking of only extreme persons as those who forget Allah and boast arrogantly. In fact, a person is boastful if he thinks that his beauty is of his own making, if he is proud of his successes, if, thinking he is adequate, he never asks himself the question: "Can I be more conscientious?", and if he behaves arrogantly and conceitedly. Therefore, every individual should seriously avoid such misconduct and should realize that he is in need and impotent against Allah and that Allah may take everything away from him if He so wills. Allah has told us what the ultimate fate of such people will be:

When it is said to him, "Fear Allah," he is seized by pride which drives him to wrongdoing. Hell will be enough for him! What an evil resting-place! (Surat al-Baqara: 206)

QUESTION 82

What should a humble person be like according to the morals of the Qur'an?

A humble person, as opposed to a boastful person, knows that everything he owns is given to him by Allah either as a blessing or as a trial. He is aware that as a human being, he is impotent and needy and that he does not have the power to do anything unless Allah so wills. Therefore, he always turns to Allah and thanks Him for every blessing. Allah has praised the humble attitude of the believers:

The servants of the All-Merciful are those who walk modestly on the earth... (Surat al-Furqan: 63)

QUESTION 83

Will I be responsible for my intentions?

Every individual is responsible for his intentions. Allah makes this clear when He says:

"...He will take you to task for the intention in your hearts have made..." (Surat al-Baqara: 225).

In every act, the intention must be to gain Allah's approval. An act may seem to be good but, if the intention behind it is to gain the approval of others, or some other worldly benefit, this act will not be acceptable in the eyes of Allah.

QUESTION 84

What is meant by "the life of this world is the enjoyment of delusion"?

One of the most serious, but largely unacknowledged misconceptions, is the supposition that the life of this world is the only real life for human beings. In fact, the world is a temporary place created by Allah to test man. What is real is the life after death. Therefore, everything that charms people and preoccupies them in the fleeting and short-lived existence of this world is an "enjoyment of delusion". As stated in the following verse, Allah warns people against this deception, reminding them that the real, beautiful abode is in the presence of Allah:

To mankind the objects of worldly appetites are painted in glowing colours: women and children, and heaped-up mounds of gold and silver, and horses with fine markings, and livestock and fertile farmland. All that is merely the enjoyment of the life of this world. Far better is the return to Allah. (Surat al 'Imran: 14)

QUESTION 85

What are the divine reasons (hiqmat) for the weaknesses people have?

There are many physical drawbacks afflicting man. First of all, man has to keep his body and his surroundings clean and

constantly look after them. The time he spares for this care takes up a large part of his life. However, no matter how much care he takes or how much cleaning he does, the effect is only temporary. A person who brushes his teeth will find that in just one hour his teeth will feel as if he had never cleaned them. Somebody who takes a bath in the summer will feel as if he never had taken a bath at all just a couple of hours later.

What is important to understand here is that such physical drawbacks have a specific purpose. These are not inherent weaknesses but have been specially created. In the same way, old age and the changes that come along with it are also weaknesses devised by Allah to make people think about the temporary nature of human life, avoid becoming attached to this world, which is full of defects, and aim at the hereafter which is the “real abode”. Allah has advised in the Qur’an that the best objective for man is the hereafter:

The life of this world is nothing but a game and a diversion. The hereafter is better for those who are pious. So will you not use your reason? (Surat al-An’am: 32)

QUESTION 86

What is the divine reason for mentioning former nations in the Qur’an?

How many generations far greater in prowess have We destroyed before them! They scoured many lands, but did they find any way of escape? There is a reminder in this for anyone who has a heart, or who listens well, having seen the evidence. (Surah Qaf: 36-37)

QUESTION 87

For what purposes were the jinn created?

Allah refers to the existence of jinn in many verses. Jinn, too, are beings that are created by Allah to worship Him. They live in a different dimension from that of man. As related in certain verses, people cannot see them, but they can see people. A wrong but widespread belief holds that jinn can supply information about the future. In the Qur’an, however, it is stated that they have no such ability. Also, we are told in the scriptures that the jinn are also held responsible for the safeguarding of the Qur’an. Allah states that the jinn were created with the same purpose as people:

I only created the jinn and man to worship Me. (Surat adh- Dhariyat: 56)

QUESTION 88

What kind of beings are angels?

Angels are beings who never err in their duty to Allah and live in a different dimension from that of human beings. Unlike people, angels are not created to be tested. Allah created them as faultless beings. Allah has assigned each one of them different tasks which they perform with precision. Gabriel has the duty of communicating the revelations of Allah to His prophets. There are writer angels on either side of every individual who write down everything he does. There are angels appointed to take a man's soul at the time of death. And there are the demons of Hell, angels who are responsible for making sure that the inmates of Hell suffer the greatest punishment.

Allah states that angels are servants to Him:

Christ would never disdain to be a servant to Allah, nor would the angels near to Him... (Surat an-Nisa': 172)

Allah bears witness that there is no god but Him, as do the angels and the sages. He is the Executor of justice. There is no god but Him, the Almighty, the All-Wise. (Surat Al 'Imran: 18)

QUESTION 89

How can we define time?

Time can be defined as a method by which one moment is compared to another. Let us explain this with an example. For instance, if anyone taps an object, he hears a particular sound. When he taps the same object five minutes later, he hears another sound. He perceives at that point that there is an interval between the first sound and the second and he calls this interval time.

Yet at the time he hears the second sound, the first sound he heard is no more than a figment of his imagination. He formulates the concept of "time" by comparing the moment in which he lives with what he has stored in his memory. If this comparison is not made, there can be no concept of time.

QUESTION 90

What does the relativity of time mean?

As mentioned above, time is apprehended through a comparison made between two events. However, this is a conclusion reached in the brain and is relative. This is plainly experienced in dreams. Although what we see in our dreams seems to last for hours, it lasts, in fact, for only a few minutes, or even a few seconds.

Many verses of the Qur'an quote various examples on this subject. Some verses indicate that people perceive time differently and

that sometimes they can perceive a very short period as a very lengthy one. The following verse in which Allah addresses the wrongdoers is an example:

He will say, 'How many years did you tarry on the earth?' They will say, 'We tarried there for a day or part of a day. Ask those able to count!' He will say, 'You only tarried there for a little while, if you but knew it! (Surat al-Muminun: 112-114)

QUESTION 91

What is destiny?

We have created all things in due measure. Our command is only one word, like the blinking of an eye. (Surat al - Qamar: 49-50)

Destiny is Allah's apprehension of all events past or future as if they were "a single moment." Most people question how Allah can already have knowledge of events that have not yet been experienced, and this leads to their failing to understand the authenticity of destiny. However, "events not yet experienced" are only so for us. Allah is not bound by time or space, for He Himself has created them. There is no concept of time in the presence of Allah. For this reason, past, future, and present are all the same to Him; for Him, everything has already taken place and is finished.

QUESTION 92

People cannot change the destiny determined by Allah, can they?

This is a distorted understanding of destiny which is prevalent in our society. For instance, people make superficial statements about a patient who returns from death's door, such as "he defeated his destiny". No one is able to change his destiny. The person who returned from death's door, didn't die precisely because he was destined not to die at that time. It is, ironically, the destiny of those people who deceive themselves by saying "I defeated my destiny" that they should say so and maintain such a mindset.

Destiny is the eternal knowledge of Allah and for Allah, Who perceives time as a single moment and Who prevails over the whole of time and space; everything is determined and finished as a matter of destiny. We also understand from what He relates in the Qur'an that time is one for Allah: occurrences that are going to take place after our death (from our point of view) are related in the Qur'an as past events already experienced. Allah is not bound by the relative time frame in which we are confined. Allah has willed these things in timelessness: people have already performed them and all these events have been lived through and are at an end.

QUESTION 93

How will resurrection come about?

Allah is All-powerful and He is the Creator of every being. No doubt, Allah, Who brought everything into being out of nothing, Who created man from a single drop of fluid, has the power to create all of them once again in a similar way. Allah, castigating the disbelievers, answers this question in the Qur'an:

That (Hell) is their repayment for rejecting Our Signs and saying, 'What, when we are bones and crumbled dust, will we then be raised up as a new creation?' Do they not see that Allah, Who created the heavens and earth, has the power to create the like of them, and has appointed fixed terms for them of which there is no doubt? But the wrongdoers still persist in unbelief. (Surat al-Isra: 98-99)

QUESTION 94

Why isn't the materialistic philosophy valid?

Materialist philosophy is a system of thought that holds that everything is composed of matter, that the universe was not created, but has existed since time immemorial and will continue to exist for all eternity.

However, the scientific developments of the last century have proven that the claims of this philosophy are totally invalid. First of all, it has been accepted by the scientific community that the

universe had a beginning, it was created from nothing and will have an end just as it was proclaimed in the Qur'an 1400 years ago. Later on, it was discovered by science that what we call "matter" is a "collection of perceptions." It was the rebuttal of these two basic claims of the materialist philosophy which ultimately invalidated it.

QUESTION 95

How did the universe come into being?

He is the Originator of the heavens and the earth... (Surat al-An'am: 101)

Today, scientists have reached a consensus that the universe came into being out of nothing—suddenly, with a great explosion called the Big Bang. Compelling evidence which caused the Big Bang Theory to be inevitably accepted is as follows:

Expansion of the universe: In 1929, Edwin Hubble discovered that all heavenly objects move away from each other, which is evidence that the universe constantly expands. This is conclusive proof that the universe came into being by the explosion of a single point (the Big Bang).

Cosmic Background Radiation: Since the universe emerged as a result of an explosion, there had to be some radiation left over from this explosion and this radiation should have pervaded the entire universe uniformly. Unsurprisingly, this radiation was found in 1965. Subsequently its existence was conclusively confirmed with the help of satellites.

The hydrogen-helium ratio in the universe: Another significant place of evidence for the Big Bang is the amount of hydrogen and helium gases in space. In the latest calculations, it was understood that the hydrogen-helium concentration in the universe complied with the theoretical calculations of the hydrogen-helium concentration remaining from the Big Bang. If the universe had no beginning and if it had existed forever, its hydrogen constituent should have been completely consumed and converted to helium.

The Big Bang Theory, which implies that the universe came into being out of nothing, meaning that it was created, ultimately destroyed the claim of the materialist philosophy that the universe had always existed and would always exist.

QUESTION 96

How do materialists explain the human spirit?

Materialists who claim that everything consists of matter that can be touched by the hand and seen by the eye, are never able to explain the human spirit and consciousness. As we know, the building blocks of everything on the earth, including the human body, are the atoms. This means that all beings, living or non-living, are formed by the combination of atoms in different forms. This is what troubles materialists most.

Man is a conscious being with willpower, who can think, speak, reason, judge and comprehend. It is impossible for such a being to have emerged out of random coincidences by the spontaneous

combination of unconscious atoms as materialists claim. It is impossible for atoms that are not able to think, reason, and judge to come together with a sudden decision to form the human spirit.

Therefore, materialists have no explanation for the spirit man possesses.

QUESTION 97

What does the theory of evolution claim?

The theory of evolution claims that life is formed by chance. According to this claim, lifeless and unconscious atoms came together to form the cell and then they somehow formed other living things, including man. Let us formulate an “experiment” on this subject under the heading of “Darwinian formula” and let us examine on the behalf of evolutionists what they really claim without their actually having spelled it out:

Let evolutionists put plenty of materials present in the composition of living beings into big barrels. Moreover, let them add to these barrels any form of matter that does not exist under normal conditions, but which they may think is necessary. Let them add to this mixture as many amino acids—which have no possibility of forming under natural conditions—and as many proteins—a single one of which has a formation probability of one in 10 to the power of 950—as they like. Let them expose these mixtures to as much heat and moisture as they see fit and then let them stir these with whatever technologically developed device they choose. Let them wait in turn beside these barrels for billions, or

even trillions of years. No matter what they do, they cannot produce from these barrels a human being. They cannot produce tigers, lions, ants, roses, lilies, magnolias, pheasants, woodpeckers, whales, kangaroos, horses, parrots, bananas, oranges, olives, pomegranates, grapes and millions of other living beings such as these. Indeed, they will not be able to obtain even a single cell of any one of them.

QUESTION 98

Do evolutionists' claims about the formation of life have any validity?

No. The claims of evolutionists holding that living beings formed by coincidence is not valid. No evolutionary process ever took place. Still, let us explain the evidence on the invalidity of the theory for those who are insistent on the subject. Evolutionists have a few classical claims which are listed below:

They claim that new living species form by natural selection and mutation.

It is impossible for the mechanism of natural selection, which is based on the idea that living beings unfitted to their habitat will become extinct, while the fit ones will survive and cause a new species to emerge. Such a mechanism only results in the selection of existing species yet never produces a new species.

Mutations, on the other hand, only causes damage in the DNA. The effect of mutations is harmful. It is not possible for them to cause a new species to be formed.

They allege that the living beings came out of the sea and on to the land.

It is impossible for a sea-dwelling living being to emerge from the sea and start living on the land, because a living being could not of its own transform itself into a totally different creature by modifying its body weight, body temperature, its system of body water usage, its kidney structure, respiration system and way of life.

They claim that birds evolved from reptiles.

This is not possible either because;

- **It is impossible for bird wings to be formed by the modification of the scales of reptiles.**
- **The lungs of birds function in a totally different way from those of land-dwelling animals.**
- **The bones of birds that are an important factor in birds' ability to fly are lighter than those of land-dwelling animals.**
- **The muscular-skeletal systems of birds and reptiles are totally different from each other.**

They allege that mammals evolved from reptiles.

This, too, is a groundless claim, because the bodies of reptiles are covered with scales, they are cold blooded and they reproduce by laying eggs. Mammals, on the other hand, are warm blooded, their bodies are covered with hair and they reproduce by giving birth to their offspring.

QUESTION 99

What are the other pieces of evidence that refute evolution?

It is possible to delve into the details of many of these pieces of evidence, but the principal ones are the following:

- | **First of all, contemporary science has conclusively proved that animate matter cannot emerge from inanimate matter.**
- | **So far, not a single transitional intermediate form of fossil has been unearthed to support the evolutionist claim that living beings have evolved from each other. Although millions of fossils belonging to normal species have been found, there is no trace of any half reptile-half bird, half fish-half reptile or half ape-half human creatures.**
- | **Proteins, which are the building blocks of living beings, cannot develop by coincidence. The probability of the chance formation of a protein with 500 amino acids is one in 10 to the power of 950. In short, such a possibility, which is incomprehensible to the human mind, has “0” chance of realization.**

QUESTION 100

Can the theory of evolution explain the sudden emergence of life on earth?

No, the theory of evolution does not offer any explanation for the

emergence of life on earth.

When terrestrial strata and the fossil record are examined, it is seen that living organisms appeared suddenly. The oldest stratum of the earth in which fossils of living creatures have been found is that of the “Cambrian,” which has an estimated age of 520-530 million years.

The fossils found in the Cambrian rocks belonged to various complex invertebrate species. Most interestingly, this wide mosaic of living creatures emerged all of a sudden without any pre-existing ancestors. This is why this miraculous event is referred to as the “Cambrian Explosion” in geological literature.

How the earth came to overflow with such a great number of animal species all of a sudden and how these distinct types of species with no common ancestors could have emerged without undergoing any evolutionary period are questions evolutionists can never answer.

QUESTION 101

What are the frauds committed by evolutionists to deceive the public?

The “ape-men” we see in newspapers, magazines, or films are all drawings based on the imagination of evolutionists. Inspired by a single tooth, evolutionists sometimes give shape to features that do not actually leave any fossil traces, such as the structure of the nose and lips, the shape of the hair, the form of the eyebrows, and

they prepare illustrations of half ape/half men creatures and even draw false pictures depicting the families and social lives of these creatures. They try to mislead the public by this method.

Evolutionists also “produce” fossils which they are unable to find, whereby they commit fraud. The most famous of these forgeries are the following:

Pitldown man: Evolutionists deceived the world of science by this forgery by attaching the jaw of a recently dead orangutan to a 500-year-old human skull. The teeth were added later in order to make the skull resemble that of a man, and the joints were filed. Then all the pieces were stained with potassium dichromate to make them look old.

Nebraska man: In 1922, evolutionists claimed that a molar tooth fossil, which they unearthed, bore the common characteristics of both man and ape. Extensive scientific research was carried out on this subject and the tooth was called the Nebraska man. Based on this single tooth, reconstructions of the Nebraska Man’s head and body were drawn. Moreover, the Nebraska Man was even pictured along with his wife and children, as a whole family in a natural setting. However, in 1927, other parts of the skeleton were found and it was established that the tooth belonged to a wild pig.

QUESTION 102

Is there such a thing as “primitive man”?

There is no such thing as “primitive man”. A few of the numerous

proofs on this subject are the following:

- **The human fossil unearthed in Spain in 1995 utterly destroyed the tale of the “evolution of man”. The 800,000 year-old human skull fossil unearthed in the Atapuerca Region belongs to the era in which half-ape creatures allegedly existed according to evolutionists, and it is no different from the modern man. This means that there is no difference between the man of 800,000 years ago and the man of today.**
- **A news item published in the New Scientist on March 14th, 1998, titled “Early humans were much smarter than we suspected...” tells us that the humans called Homo Erectus by evolutionists were practicing seamanship 700 thousand years ago. These humans, who had enough knowledge and technology to build a vessel and possessed a culture that made use of sea transport, can hardly be called “primitive.”**
- **The 26 thousand year old needle fossils that were unearthed show that the being which the evolutionists call the Neanderthal man, had knowledge of clothing tens of thousands of years ago. This reveals that Neanderthals, who were deliberately pictured as ape-like creatures in false illustrations, were in fact no different from modern man.**

QUESTION 103

Can the formation of complex systems in living beings be explained by evolution?

No, it cannot. Complex systems in living beings, like the eye and the ear, which are made up of multiple components, can function

only when all its components are intact. For instance, for an eye to see, it is necessary that its approximately 40 components be intact. The eye would not be able to see if any one of these, for instance the eye retina or the tear glands, was missing. The conclusion we must arrive at, therefore, is that all the parts of such systems must have been created simultaneously. This, of course, proves the invalidity of evolution once again.

So, what would it mean if a complex structure were to come into being in a single moment?

Unquestionably, the emergence of many components at the same time, at the same place could only be the result of a special creation.



QUESTION 104

Why is the theory of evolution defended so persistently by certain circles although it has no scientific validity whatsoever?

People who disregard the existence of Allah and are reluctant to admit that they are responsible to Him seek a logical justification for their stance and a means of convincing other people to agree with them. Claiming that everything has been formed by chance, they try to make people admit that a Creator does not exist and therefore they are not responsible to anyone.

At this juncture, the theory of evolution serves as a so-called scientific mainstay for nonbeliever philosophies. This is why

people, who are obdurate in denying Allah, defend this theory as an ideological and philosophical possibility although it has no scientific validity, and no matter whether they believe that it is right or not.

They said, ‘Glory be to You! We have no knowledge except what You have taught us. You are the All-Knowing, the All-Wise.’ (Surat al-Baqara: 32)